

an auction bid recipient means for receiving at least one bid for an item being presented in the auction item presentation means; and

payment recipient means for receiving payment information from a bidder connected over the internet with the bid for the item.

--34. The system of claim 33 further comprising payment verification means for passing said payment information to an external clearinghouse for verification.

--35. The system of claim 33 further comprising:

said database to presentation formatting program is a world wide web to database mapping program.

--36. The system of claim 33 further comprising:

a transaction processor to debit an account identified by the payment information if the bid submitted is approved.

--37. The system of claim 33 wherein the payment information identifies a credit card.

--38. The system of claim 36 wherein the payment information identifies a credit card and wherein the transaction processor charges the credit card for the payment associated with the bid that was approved.

--39. The system of claim 33 wherein the auction item presentation means presents the auction item information as a markup language page.

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--40. An auction participant system for enabling participation in an on-line auction conducted over a packet-switched network comprising:

an auction item receiving means for receiving a page of information containing one or more items available for auction;

an auction bid input means for inputting a bid for at least one of the items presented in the page and for inputting payment information associated with the bid; and

bid transmission means for transmitting the bid and payment information over the packet-switched network to a bid processor system.

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--41. The system of claim 40 wherein the auction item receiving means comprises a web browser connected over the internet to a server at the bid processor system and the page comprises a markup language page.

--42. The system of claim 40 wherein the payment information identifies a credit card approved by the bidder to pay for the item in the amount of the bid.

--43. A system for auctioning a uniquely identified item over a packet-switched network system comprising:

a database of data records, each data record relating to an item and comprising identification code to uniquely identify the item;

an auction system that presents an item for auction accessible by a plurality of participants by presenting a mark-up language page of information to the participants over a network that is available for auction at a specified time;

wherein the auction system is connected to the network of participants to receive bids from the participants over the packet-switched network and terminates the auction when predetermined criteria are satisfied; and

wherein the auction system transmits information to a selected auction participant regarding where the selected auction participant should submit payment information for the auctioned item.

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--44. The system of claim 43 further comprising:

wherein the auction system may be access by participants on the packet-switched network; and

wherein the auction system refuses to accept bids after predetermined parameters have been satisfied.

--45. The system of claim 43 wherein the auction system comprises a world wide web page server interface for receiving bids from auction participants connected to the auction system over the world wide web.

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--46. The system of claim 43 wherein the auction system receives payment information with each bid.

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--47. The system of claim 46 wherein the auction system receives payment information that identifies a credit card account, transmits the credit card account information to a verification system before processing the bid.

--48. The system of claim 47 wherein the auction system selects a bid based on predetermined criteria, processes the credit card account for the amount of the bid and transfers legal ownership of the item to the participant that submitted the bid.

--49. An auction participation system for enabling participation in an on-line auction over a packet-switched network system to an auction processor that processes bids for items being auctioned, the auction participation system comprising:

an auction page recipient means that receives a page from a server at the auction processor containing information about at least one item being auctioned;

bid input means for enabling the participant to input a bid for submission to the auction processor over the packet-switched network; and

bid award receiving means for receiving an indication that the bid was awarded to the participant; and

input means for enabling the participant to input payment information in response to the bid award.

--50. The system of claim 49 wherein the auction page receiving means comprises a web browser system that accesses a server at the auction processor to receive the page.

--51. The system of claim 49 wherein the auction system receives payment information with each bid.

Sub 07 --52. The system of claim 51 wherein the auction system receives payment information that identifies a credit card account and transmits the credit card account information to a verification system before processing the bid.

--53. The system of claim 52 wherein the auction system selects a bid based on predetermined criteria, processes the credit card account for the amount of the bid and transfers legal ownership of the item to the participant that submitted the bid.

3 --54. A system for facilitating commerce at an internet auction comprising:
 auction item receiving means for receiving information regarding an item to be posted for an auction from one or more auction participants;

 auction processor means for processing information received by the auction item receiving means and presenting that information in a format to be transmitted to auction participants over a packet-switched network; and

 bid receiving means for receiving bids for the item presented to auction participants.


--55. A method for facilitating an internet auction comprising:

 receiving information from a seller about an item to be auctioned at a computer programmed to receive information from said seller over a communication network, said information about said item to be auctioned including a selection of a predetermined topical category, said predetermined topical category organizing said item to be auctioned into a predetermined list of categories at said computer;

generating in response to said reception of said information of said item to be auctioned from said seller a unique identification number or code which is generated by a program executing on said computer;

notifying said seller of said unique identification number or code generated in response to receiving information about said item to be auctioned generated in response to receiving information about said item to be auctioned;

auctioning said item to be auctioned at said computer with an auction process program, said auction process program indicating said predetermined topical category selected by said seller for presentation and indexing of said item to be auctioned; and

 publishing said auction to a plurality of auction participants over a computer network in response to a request from said participants to display said item to be auctioned, said request to display said item being processed by a computer program executing on said computer; and

receiving information of a least one bid at said computer on said item now being auctioned, said computer updating its display of said item to be auctioned in response to said receipt of said information of at least one bid at least in response to the next request for display of information about said item now being auctioned from a least one auction participant.

--56. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process displaying an advertisement with said information of said item for auction to said plurality of data packet users;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid; and

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system.

--57. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

* a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network;

* a second data storage location for holding information for an advertisement at a main web page that displays said item for auction and allowing access to said second data storage location by said participant to direct placement of said advertisement at said main web page;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process displaying an advertisement with said information of said item for auction to said plurality of data packet users;

1st participant
directed to
the seller
of the
item

direct placement

prominent

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid; and

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system.

--58. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network, said first data storage location indexed by a predetermined list of topical categories of potential items to be auctioned, said predetermined topical category accessed by a first participant to direct the indexing of said item to be auctioned into said predetermined topical category ;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process indexing said item in said predetermined categories of said items to be auctioned, said system allowing display of a list of said items for auction in said predetermined list of topical categories of said items to be auctioned;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from

said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid; and

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system.

--59. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network, said first data storage location indexed by a predetermined list of topical categories of potential items to be auctioned, said predetermined topical category accessed by a first participant to direct the indexing of said item to be auctioned into said predetermined topical category ;

a second data storage location for holding information for an advertisement at a main web page that displays said item for auction and allowing access to said second data storage location by said participant to direct placement of said advertisement at said main web page;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process indexing said item in said predetermined categories of said items to be auctioned, said system allowing display of a list of said items for auction in said

predetermined list of topical categories of said items to be auctioned, said display process displaying said advertisement of said item from said second memory location;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid; and

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system.

--60. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network, said first data storage location indexed by a predetermined list of topical categories of potential items to be auctioned, said predetermined topical category accessed by a first participant to direct the indexing of said item to be auctioned into said predetermined topical category ;

a second data storage location for holding information for an advertisement at a web page at said system and allowing access to said second data storage location by said participant to direct placement of said advertisement at said web page;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process indexing said item in said predetermined categories of

said items to be auctioned, said system allowing display of a list of said items for auction in said predetermined list of topical categories of said items to be auctioned, said display process displaying said advertisement of said item from said second memory location, said display process mapping information from a database that contains said first data storage location to a predetermined hypertext markup language format for display to said plurality of data packet network users;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid;

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system; and

a fee calculation process for calculating a fee payable to said system at the close of said auction.

--61. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network, said first data storage location indexed by a predetermined list of topical categories of potential items to be auctioned, said predetermined topical category accessed by a first participant to direct the indexing of said item to be auctioned into said predetermined topical category ;

a second data storage location for holding information for an advertisement at a main web page that displays said item for auction and allowing access to said second data storage location by said participant to direct placement of said advertisement at said main web page;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process indexing said item in said predetermined categories of said items to be auctioned, said system allowing display of a list of said items for auction in said predetermined list of topical categories of said items to be auctioned, said display process displaying said advertisement of said item from said second memory location, said display process mapping information from a database that contains said first data storage location to a predetermined hypertext markup language format for display to said plurality of data packet network users;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid; and

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system.

--62. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network, said first data storage location indexed by a predetermined list of topical categories of potential items to be auctioned, said predetermined topical category accessed by a first participant to direct the indexing of said item to be auctioned into said predetermined topical category;

a second data storage location for holding information for an advertisement at a web page at said system and allowing access to said second data storage location by said participant to direct placement of said advertisement at said web page;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a posting process for generating a tracking number or code for said item to be auctioned from said first participant in said data packet network, a third memory location for holding said tracking number or code for said item to be auctioned, said posting process notifying said first participant in said data packet network of said tracking number;

a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process indexing said item in said predetermined categories of said items to be auctioned, said system allowing display of a list of said items for auction in said predetermined list of topical categories of said items to be auctioned, said display process displaying said advertisement of said item from said second memory location, said display process mapping information from a database that contains said first data storage location to a predetermined hypertext markup language format for display to said plurality of data packet network users;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid;

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system, and

a fee calculation process for calculating a fee payable to said system at the close of said auction.

--63. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions comprising:

a first data storage location for holding information about an item for auction from a first participant in a data packet network, said first data storage location indexed by a predetermined list of topical categories of potential items to be auctioned, said predetermined topical category accessed by a first participant to direct the indexing of said item to be auctioned into said predetermined topical category, said first data storage location holding a digital image of said good for auction and said first data storage location being able to hold a reserve price for said item to be auctioned by said first participant in said data packet network;

a second data storage location for holding information for an advertisement at a web page at said system and allowing access to said second data storage location by said participant to direct placement of said advertisement at said web page;

a verification process that verifies a user identification for said first participant in said data packet network, said verification process confirming a user identification before allowing said first participant in said data packet network access to place information about an item for auction in said system;

a posting process for generating a tracking number or code for said item to be auctioned from said first participant in said data packet network, a third memory location for holding said tracking number or code for said item to be auctioned, said posting process notifying said first participant in said data packet network of said tracking number, said system providing access to said item to be auctioned by said first participant with said tracking number or code for said item to be auctioned;

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a display process for displaying information of said item for auction to a plurality of data packet network users, said display process indexing said item in said predetermined categories of said items to be auctioned, said system allowing display of a list of said items for auction in said predetermined list of topical categories of said items to be auctioned, said display process displaying said advertisement of said item from said second memory location, said display process mapping information from a database that contains said first data storage location to a predetermined hypertext markup language format for display to said plurality of data packet network users;

an auction process for receiving bids on said item for auction from at least one of said plurality of data packet network users, said auction process verifying a user identification from said at least one of a plurality of data packet network users before allowing receipt of said data packet network user bid;

a notification process for notifying said at least one of said plurality of data packet network participants that said bid was accepted by said system; and

a fee calculation process for calculating a fee payable to said system at the close of said auction.

IN THE ABSTRACT: